Nation

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Hockey Time!

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OVER 25, 000 CREES CAN'T BE WRONG!

editorial

You give, I give, we all give for... what exactly?

By Steve Bonspiel

Christmas has come and gone and most people have been left with large credit card bills and for some, a bit of an empty feeling.

The way in which the western world eats up the commercialism of the holiday season is nothing short of miraculous.

Designer jeans, Rolex watches, a new this or that, it's become so much about the money companies can make that they refer to it as the "holiday shopping season."

It wasn't always this way. Christmas used to have a meaning for most people, beyond sports jackets and pleated pants.

Imagine the days of our forefathers who didn't even know what Christmas or who the guy with the thick beard was (and I don't mean Santa). Things were much simpler back then when giving occurred year round and sharing was a common theme within our communities.

Part of the reason was survival. Another element was a genuine love for life and for one another, regardless of beliefs.

These days it seems that people take the human aspect for granted and have reverted to showing their love and appreciation for one another through gifts.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not necessarily against the practice, after all I have nieces and nephews who don't understand anything but who bought what for whom. Even then they don't really care, as long as they get a ton of presents.

The recent tragedy in Africa and Asia really got me thinking about this practice. A lot of those people had very little and when the monstrous tsunami waves hit their shores were either left with nothing or killed.

The wrath of Mother Nature was swift and merciless.

This probably affected me more personally because I visited Thailand in October on vacation. One of my good friends lives and works not that far away from where it happened and I still haven't heard from him.

There are not enough times in life when people stop to think about what's going on around them, let alone 12,000 kilometres away.

These people had loved ones, lives to live, and families. Did they deserve what they got? Definitely not, but such is the way of the cruelest power on earth.

At press time, the death toll had reached 80,000. Some predictions went as far as to say that the number would reach well over 100,000 people dead.

The Canadian government has responded with a relief package worth $40 million. That, coupled with aid from other countries, is a good sign that when disaster strikes, there are still people who care.

One of the things I did personally to help was donate money to the Red Cross. Although there are many organizations helping to send supplies and personnel, I chose the Red Cross because of their excellent reputation on the international scene. I think those who can afford it should do the same; even if it's only $5, it's still something.

Let us hope and pray that our efforts and the efforts of others will help to save lives and reunite family and friends.

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Contents

editorial

You give, I give 3

rez notes

Old Long Since... 4

news

Northwest Company Does It 5

In Brief 7

Pulse of the Nation 9

articles

Cree Hockey Tournament 10

Can Anyone Hear My Plea? 17

Hot Flavours 21

The Spirit of Hockey 22

on the cover

Cree Hockey Benefit Goalie in Chibougamau

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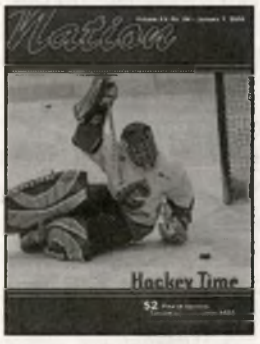

Old Long Since...

Sonny Orr

Auld Lang Syne could barely be heard over the din of the New Year's revellers' cheers and quiet kisses to loved ones or even total strangers as it swept over North America, chiming in the New Year in four different time zones and memories of past years come to rest and a New Year beginning. Most of us get the chance to do the countdown in anticipation of better times and many of us do party till the wee hours of the new dawn, but have any of us actually understood the song that personifies New Year's Eve, the original written by no other than Robert Burns? Who, you ask, and what significance does he have with today and tomorrow?

The words seem mystical and yet completely incomprehensible to those besotted and worldly at the stroke of midnight. The world sings this song, but for what cause? We play it endlessly on local radio stations in several different beats and like the mega-millennium-hit *Amazing Grace*, its tune has carried for more than a century. Yet, the very lyrics are the general theme of our culture, as it does have predictive meaning, sort of like Nostradamus's so called predictions in quatrains which no one can figure out until after it supposedly happened. They are called predictions, but only recognized after the fact, so what good is it if it can't warn us of impending dangers or niceties to come? Auld Lang Syne has the same effect; you hear it and say it but don't understand it.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!
For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet,
For *auld lang syne*!

This is a song to tell you not to forget the past. I think that it means not to forget who you just met and professed your undying love for, before blacking out, only to awake to a New Year hangover. As you look groggily in the mirror, you wonder if they are hickeys or someone's death strangle hold on your throat, you wonder if the air is real bad, or is it the exhaust emanating from your parched throat and leathery tongue and onto your offended olfactory senses. You wonder if you really did have a good time or a bad time, but who cares at this time of the year?

In the old days, noise was the way and feasting was the pay, in with the new and out with the old, they say. But to many who never had access to a turkey or cake, had their chance with the Roman Catholic Church, who would throw a feast and tsk-tsk those they hadn't seen in a year. Everyone's a Catholic on New Year's Eve, the grizzled Father would say. Also, the winter would start with feasts and more feasts, as a way to stock up and bulk up your body to accommodate January's cold and today, this tradition is carried on, except for the inconvenience of a cold piece of turkey on a plastic plate, everything remains the same. Not to forget long since. Happy New Year everyone!

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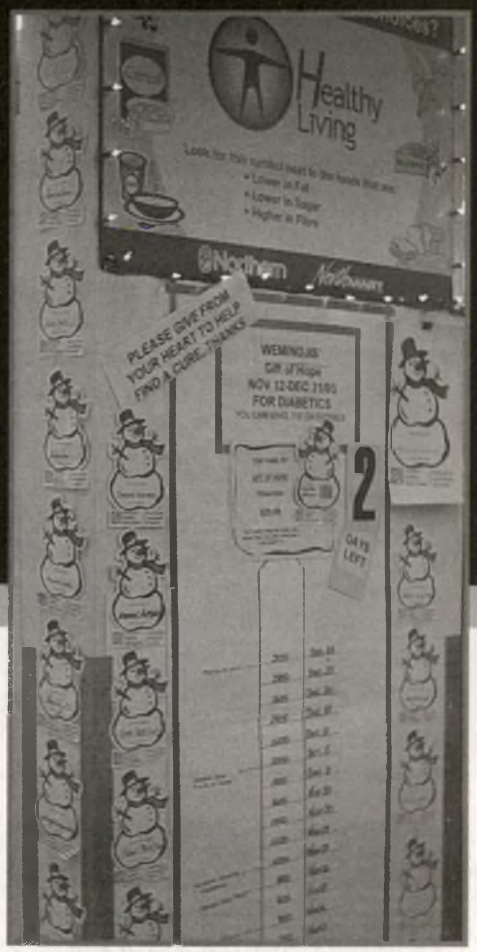
Canada

NORTHWEST COMPANY DOES IT AGAIN!

Chisasibi, Wemindji stores battle it out for diabetes snowman supremacy

By Steve Bonspiel



With a ring of the cash register and a wipe of the brow, Northern Store workers wrapped up their fight against diabetes with a smile just in time for the New Year.

As reported last year in the Nation, Northern Stores across Eeyou Istchee are in an annual battle in their fight against diabetes (and for bragging rights) by selling paper snowmen at $2 a pop.

Last year's far and away leader was Wemindji, which managed to sell 3,209 snowmen. The number is even more incredible when you consider the community's population of only 1,200 people!

They improved on that total this time around by selling 5,219 snowmen!

Wemindji, along with the Northern Stores in Eastmain, Chisasibi, Whapmagoostui and Waskaganish wrapped up their awareness campaign on December 31. Their goal was to sell as many $2 snowmen as possible with the proceeds going towards diabetes research for the Canadian Diabetes Association.

They combined to sell an astounding 13,076 snowmen!

Things were a little different in 2004, however. It was war – kind hearted and for a good cause – but war nonetheless.

"I called Brian (Wemindji's Northern Store manager) at the beginning of the year to say that we were going to kick his butt," laughed Brent Bowen, the manager at the Chisasibi store.

Last year, Bowen admitted he wasn't familiar with the program and didn't put in the effort necessary to compete with Wemindji. This year was a different story.

"Wemindji was the winner last year and they've done an excellent job," said Bowen. "But this being my second year, we decided we'd give them a run for their money."

Bowen helps inspire the staff to sell by providing little incentives like a free breakfast for the best seller of the day.

"We've been pushing real hard to sell them and we had the entire town involved. We had the band office, the Rona, the co-op, and the coffee shops all selling snowmen to fight this disease," he said proudly. Their goal was to sell $15,000 worth of snowmen, or roughly 7,500 snowmen.

They fell short in selling 6,722, but an amazing statistic is that they outsold 10 Giant Tiger stores in Winnipeg by almost 500 snowmen.

"The response has been overwhelming in the community. The entire town has really gotten behind us and it's excellent to see."

Their efforts have not gone unnoticed across Canada. Bowen received an email from a manager at a Northern Store in Manitoba whose grandfather has diabetes. His store had sold 100 snowmen and could not fathom the space it would take to put thousands on the wall. He wished to thank the two stores for their unbelievable achievement and added; "you haven't just recorded the most sales, you've really helped to make a difference in the fight for a cure."

"We've (Chisasibi and Wemindji) far outdone the rest of the country," said Bowen. "There's no other store that even comes close so the staff and the people should hold their heads high."

Brian Haines has only been in

continued on page 7

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continued from page 5

Wemindji since June, but he's humbly picked up where the previous manager left off. "I asked my staff to sell and they did," he said. "I don't think I sold 10 or 12 snowmen myself, it really wasn't about me; it was the staff led by Doreen Sash who really came through.

"The community also played a big part, once they realized that the other communities were challenging us, they jumped on the bandwagon. They weren't going to let them beat us," he said.

"The Cree have really blown everyone (across Canada) away with their enthusiasm and dedication they have in fighting this disease."

The fight against this disease is a personal one for the people. The diabetes rate in Eeyou Istchee is three times that of other Canadians. Because of that, it's less surprising when two of the Cree stores sell over 5,000 Frosties each. Yet the Winnipeg affiliate, Giant Tiger, can only manage sales of 6,236, despite their much larger population.

This year, 36,505 snowmen were sold in all 162 Northern Stores across Canada. That represented an increase of close to 10,000 paper snowmen! When you consider that each snowman is $2 and the Northwest Company tops that off with a $1 donation per snowman, the company's donation to the CDA was pegged at almost $110,000.

Running (and jogging) against diabetes

The North West Company has done it again.

Entering the 2004 Honolulu Marathon for the fourth consecutive year, Team Diabetes successfully completed their run and, most importantly, raised over $110,000 in the fight against the debilitating disease.

The team was chosen from across North West's operations in Canada. Manasie Quanaq of Igloolik, Nunavut, Rose Gallo from Kuujjuaq, Dee Opperman of Norman Wells, Northwest Territories, and Denise Batterton, Christine Reimer and Team Captain John Murphy from Winnipeg were the participants in the marathon, held December 12.

Left to right - Denise Batterton (Winnipeg), Christine Reimer (Winnipeg), John Murphy (Winnipeg), Rose Gallo (Kuujjuaq), Manasie Quanaq (Igloolik), Dee Opperman (Norman Wells)

"This was a dedicated team that committed hundreds of hours to training and fundraising," said Edward Kennedy, President and CEO of the North West Company. "They are truly leaders in raising awareness of diabetes and the value of healthy living."

The North West Company, which is the largest corporate donor to the Canadian Diabetes Association, has raised $350,000 for diabetes research over the last three years.

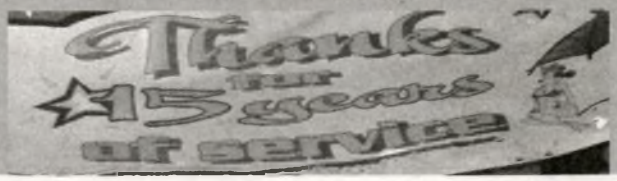
The North West Company continues to promote their "Healthy Living" campaign by selling low fat and low sugar foods in an easily identifiable packages. These alternative choices have helped in fighting diabetes and obesity in the company's 162 locations across Canada.

Deputy Chief Wooton, Chief Longchap, Micheal Petawabano and family

Michael Petawabano received a plaque of recognition and thanks from the Mistissini Band Council at the local New Years Eve festivities in Mistissini. It was for his 15 years in policing in Mistissini. Chief John Longchap said his dedication was commendable given the hard working conditions of police everywhere.

The Mistissini Band Council gave Petawabano and his entire family a trip to Florida to go to Disneyland.

Petawabano is currently the co-coordinator of Territorial Programs for the Cree Human Resources Development.



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New Year's RESOLUTIONS

Pulse of the Nation

by Norman Fireman

In this issue of the Pulse of the Nation we asked people in Eeyou Istchee for their New Year's resolutions. It is good to know people are getting health-minded and want to better themselves physically, but we only heard from one person who wants to quit bingo or gambling.

Charles Bobbish, Chisasibi: My New Year's resolution is to think more about my people; to make myself more available to them. I travel a lot and as a councilor you have to be available to your community. I didn't have time for that before but now I want to give priority to the people and to help them deal with their personal problems.

Barry Bearskin, Chisasibi: My New Year's resolution is to not have a New Year's resolution because I never stick to it anyways.

Delores Washipabino, Chisasibi: My New Year's resolution is to stop smoking. That's the battle of my life. I've tried 64 times before to try and quit smoking but never succeeded. I wish I had the willpower of Cree People because when they want to quit smoking, they don't have to use patches or pills, they just go right ahead and stop smoking and that's it.

Clifford Wasibipabino, Chisasibi: My New Year's resolution is to watch my health more closely. I was diagnosed with high blood pressure and the doctor said I have to start exercising more, eat more healthy foods and that's what I'll probably do.

Harry Snowboy, Chisasibi: My New Year's resolution is to try and keep the same goals I had before. Take care of my family; also to try and keep myself in good physical shape. Just basically do what I've done every year: help and try to make a difference in our community and do whatever I can to better myself in order to help other people.

Juliet Weapinacappo, Eastmain: It took me a long time to quit smoking and I finally quit sometime in 2003. That was the hardest thing I found in my life was to quit smoking; I'm still hanging on. I guess that's still my New Year's resolution; to keep trying and taking it one day at a time.

George Blacksmith, Mistissini: My New Year's resolution is to finish my PhD. To finish what I set out to do so after that I can return back home and help my people.

Daniel White, Mistissini: I guess my New Year's resolution is to be more nice to people because I haven't been very nice to people in the past year.

John Shem, Whapmagoostui: First of all I want to try and look after my health. And in the New Year I'm going back to school to complete my program, hopefully within one year. I took Business Administration before but didn't finish so now I want to go back and finish the program. Also I want to include in my New Year's resolution to be closer to my family and I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Andrew Natachequan, Whapmagoostui: I have quit just about everything now. I don't use sugar, but it's going to be hard to quit tea, that's the only beverage I drink. And I quit smoking for 30 years now and haven't touched a drop of liquor for almost 40 years. I quit that when I finally realized it wasn't good for our family life. On March 2nd I'll be 80 years old and if I ever hurt anyone in my life then that will be my New Year's resolution; to never again hurt another human being as long as I live. This I speak from my heart. I would like to wish everyone a safe holiday and best wishes for the New Year.

Isaac Masty, Whapmagoostui: For a long time I've been trying to lose weight. I know it's not

continued on page 15

feature

Photos by Oscar Kistabish

24TH ANNUAL CREE HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

by Norman Fireman

The 24th Annual Cree Nation Hockey Tournament took place at the Palais des sports arena in Val d'Or from December 17- 21st.

The Class "A" Hockey Champions were the Mistissini Trappers. In class "B", the Kuujuak Umimaqs took home the prize, while the Waskaganish Ex-Wings triumphed in class "C".

Below is a list of the other teams who brought home gold, as well as individual award winners.

Women's Champions:

Women's Hockey - Waskaganish Panthers
Broomball class "A" - Wemindji Ice Stars
Broomball Class "B" - Chisasibi Goh (Chisasibi women)

Old Timers - Mistissini Rusty Blades

Individual Award Winners:

Class "A"

Best Defenceman
Mistissini Trappers - Errol Mianscum

Top Scorer
Mistissini Trappers - Chris Brant

Best Forward
Waskaganish Wings - Steve Cheechoo

Best Goalie
Waskaganish Wings - Lott Moses

M.V.P.
Mistissini Trappers - Cliff Bennac

Class "B"

Best Defence
Mistissini Falcons - Wesley Trapper

Top Scorer
Mistissini Falcons - Shaun Iserhoff

Best Forward
Kuujuak - El Tacolik

Best Goalie
Mistissini Falcons - Brian Peterson

M.V.P.
Kuujuak Umimaqs - Korn Pinguapipk

Class "C"

Best Defenceman
Waskaganish Ex-Wings - Jason Mathias

Top Scorer
Waswanipi Grand Chiefs - Mario Wabbinonik

Best Forward
Waskaganish Braves - Arthur Diamond

Best Goalie
Waskaganish Braves - Wilfred Moses

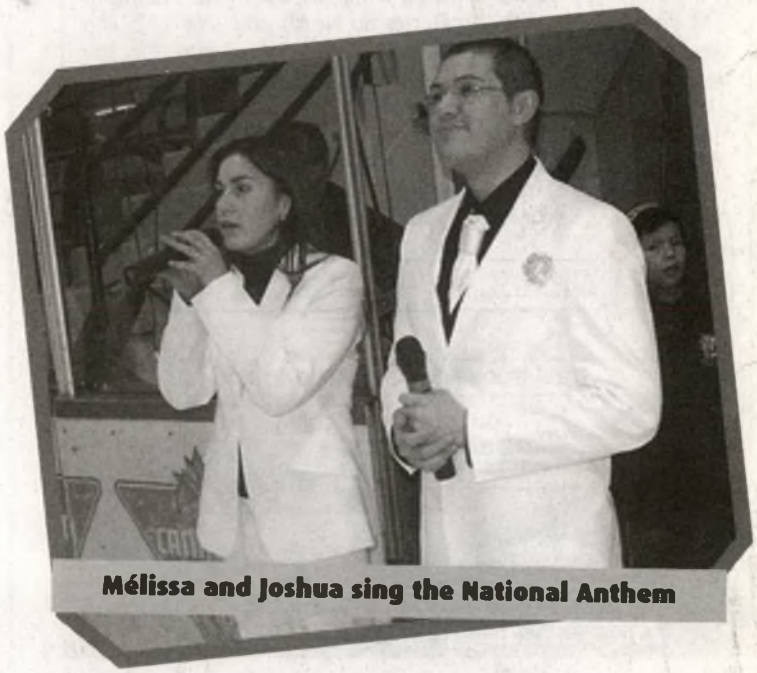
M.V.P.
Waskaganish Ex-Wings - David Jonah

Old Timers

Best Defenceman
Waskaganish Big Chiefs - Hugo Blackned

Top Scorer
Whapmagoostui Whalers - John King

Best Forward
Mistissini Rusty Blades - John Mianscum



Mélissa and Joshua sing the National Anthem

Val d'Or Mayor Fernand Trahan and mascot Dynamite

Société d'énergie de la Baie James

Traffic disrupted between Matagami and the Eastmain-1 jobsite

Over a 45-day period, Blais et Langlois will be transporting pieces of steel armouring from Matagami to the Eastmain-1 jobsite. This will considerably disrupt traffic from mid-January 2005 to mid-February 2005. About fifteen trips are planned, which could each take up to three days to complete. Each trip will be divided into two parts: from Matagami to Kilometre 274 (intersection with the Route du Nord) and, the following day, from Kilometre 407 to the Eastmain-1 jobsite. On the James Bay highway, the convoy will stop every 30 minutes, and/or as needed, to allow traffic through. However, from the Route du Nord to the Eastmain-1 jobsite, vehicles will not be able to pass the convoy. Hydro-Québec Security will be making sure that everything goes smoothly, several kilometres ahead of the convoy.

Call, if you don't want to wait

A toll-free line is available to find out about the convoy's position.

For information, please call

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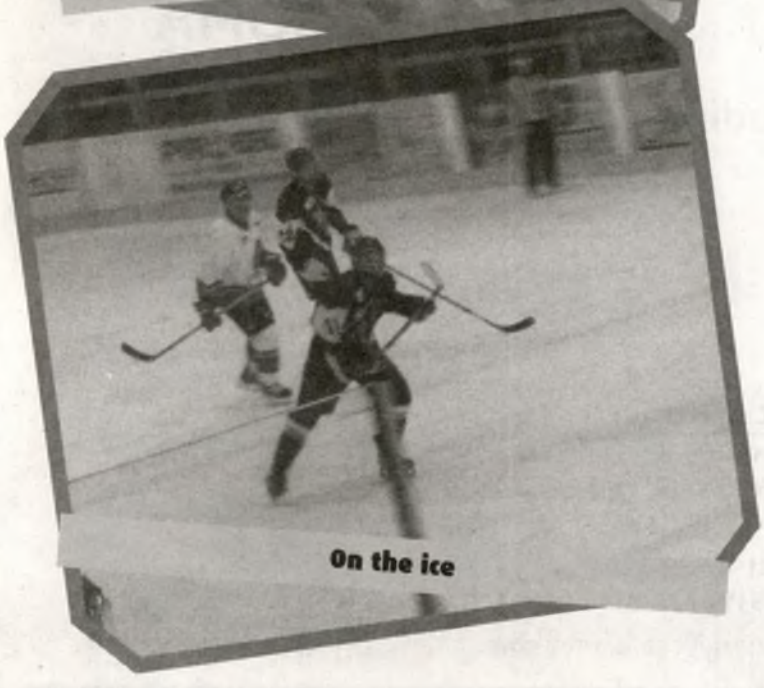
Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses and mascot Dynamite

Waskaganish dancers



On the ice

Best Goalie
Mistissini Rusty Blades - Kenny Cheechoo

M.V.P.
Mistissini Rusty Blades - Joe Coon

Women's Hockey

Best Defencewoman
Wani Mowatt - Pikogan

Top Scorer
Mistissini Mustangs - Jewell Matoush

Best Forward
Waskaganish - Lornna Whiskeychan

Best Goalie
Waskaganish - Laona Blackned

M.V.P.
Waskaganish - Emmy Diamond

Class "A" Broomball

Best Defencewoman
Waswanipi North Stars - Janice Gull

Top Scorer
Waswanipi North Stars - Michelline Saganash

Best Forward
Waswanipi North Stars - Stephanie Charles

Best Goalie
Wemindji Ice Stars - Victoria Mistacheesik

M.V.P.
Wemindji Ice Stars - Cheryl Weapinnacappo

Class "B" Broomball

Best Defensewoman
Chisasibi Goh - Jennifer Bearskin

Top Scorer
Waskaganish Wild Cats - Tracy Blackned

Best Forward
Mistissini Glaciers - Patsy Rabbitskin

Best Goalie
Chisasibi Goh - Charlene Georgekish

M.V.P.
Chisasibi Goh - Christiana Kitty

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To learn more about the services of the Secretariat feel free to contact Mr. Hester

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continued from page 9

New Year's RESOLUTIONS

Pulse of the Nation

really helping me to live a normal life style. I tried many times before but never succeeded. The doctor told me I really have to try and lose weight. But right now I'm really enjoying the Christmas feasting, the food is too good. But I will get right on with it this coming year, so that's my New Year's resolution. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everybody.

Vera George, Whapmagoostui: One thing I would like to improve is my weight. I want to exercise more and eat healthier meals. I used to go to the gym before but I kept quitting every two months or so. My New Year's resolution is to be more consistent in my gym workouts. And do more walking around the community to try and stay in shape. Be more health conscious. I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Reggie Mark, Wemindji: For my New Year's resolution I want to stop smoking. Take up the challenge from the Health board. We were thinking the whole family should take up the challenge. Hopefully we'll succeed. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone.

Nancy Danyluk, Wemindji: My New Year's resolution is to be more physically active. To try and live a healthier life style because I'm realizing I'm not watching my health as I should. I used to go join the fitness centre but I want to go back to that starting in the New Year. I also got a Bible last year for a Christmas present .I haven't been reading it lately so starting this New Year I want to read it every day. I don't have to be a Christian to do that. I just want to gain knowledge from the Good Book and to get guidance in my life and to learn to respect my fellow human beings. Merry Christmas to everyone and a Happy New Year.

Caroline Jolly, Nemaska: My New Year's resolution is to pay off my bills. Also to try and be more physically active. Because of my job I never have time to do these things. So for this New Year I want to be able to do more physical activities. That is my New Year's resolution and I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Mary Bowen, Waswanipi: I have quit just about everything, too. I don't smoke or drink anymore. The only problem is going to bingos so that's my New Year's resolution: try and stop going to too many bingos. My New Year's resolution is to think more about my people; to make myself more available to them. I travel a lot and as a counsellor you have to be available to your community. I didn't have time for that before but now I want to give priority to the people and to help them deal with their personal problems.

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

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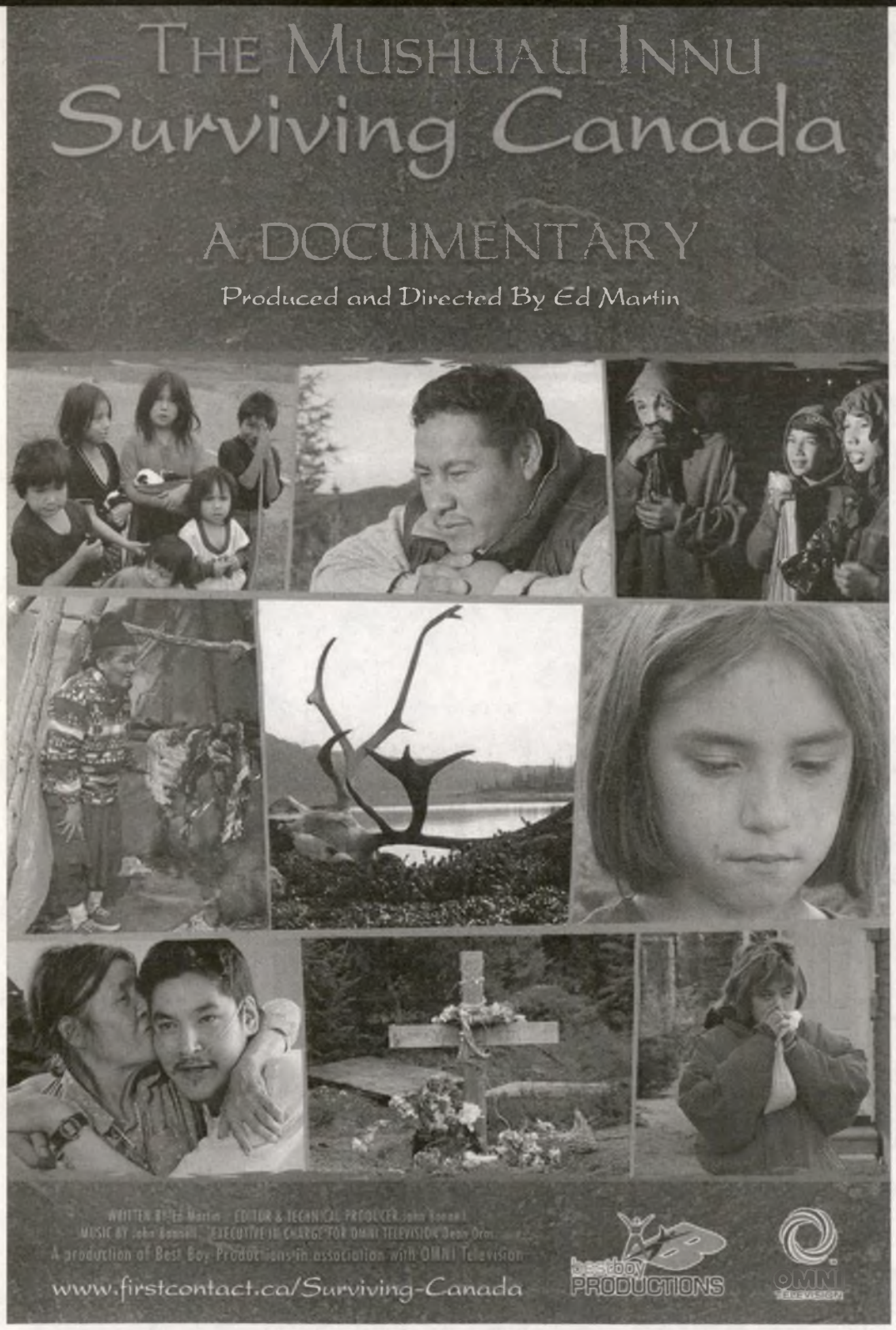
"Can anyone hear my plea, I am on a fast road to extinction"

Looking at a powerful film on the fate of the Innu of Labrador.



By Danielle Valade

The Mushuau Innu – Surviving Canada is a documentary written, produced and directed by Ed Martin about the appalling tragedy of the Labrador Innu. Canada, a country that much of the world views as one of the best places to live, is, in fact, where cultural genocide is still taking place... and barely anyone notices. The slow death of the Innu people and their culture is the direct fruit of government policy; a sad tale of a proud Nation..

(continued on page 19...)

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After having lived nomadic lives in the tundra of Labrador for 6,000 years, the Innu are the last Aboriginal people in Canada to be forced to live in settlements and learn non-Innu language and religion.

"Strong hunters, roaming free, they were highly successful and independent people," Martin narrates in his film. The best way for the government to control the nomadic Innu was to round them up in 1967 on an island, the infamous Davis Inlet, with promises of a paradise. With the help of the Church, which stripped them of their beliefs and sexually abused some, the government decided to assimilate the Innu into the white world. They were built sub-standard housing without the promised running water and sewage system. Ironically, the school, the priest's house and the RCMP did have running water.

Instead of successful assimilation Canada left the Innu in a place without any social structures or resources. A place where they could no longer hunt, a place where their culture faded away and their hope died.

"As their sense of worth disintegrated, they engaged in self-destructive behavior," Martin observes. "Ninety per cent became alcoholic, many children sniff gas, violence is rampant. They are killing themselves at a rate among the world's highest."

The federal government does not a thing to help the children, they have not provided any social or health services even after all the pleas. Only promises, again. How can this be allowed? It says a lot about our white society and our government and it is shameful.

With a stroke of the pen, when Newfoundland joined the constitution in 1949, the Innu were excluded from the Indian Act. A report from the Human Rights Commission in 1993 stated that the federal government had failed the constitutional rights of the Innu for more than 50 years. It took 10 years from that report date for the government to relocate the 700 residents to Natuashish, where new houses, running water and sewage were in place. It became evident in a few months that the problems moved as well and became even worse. Today 35 per cent of Innu schoolchildren suffer from fetal alcohol syndrome. Many children drop out as early as primary school due to an education system that does not relate to the Innu way of life. Something needs to be done before the last Innu kills himself. The rate of attempted suicide now is between 10 and 12 per month and since July 2004, four have succeeded.

The learning curve of the federal government is critically deficient. It has not learned from all other tragedies of Canada's First Nation people. Bullying a people and changing their way of live simply kills the human spirit. Running water and toilets do not heal the wounds. If the government wants to do right by the Innu, it has to save and protect the youth, the generation yet spared by drugs and alcohol, and provide all necessary social resources to help the Innu live in a strong and healthy society. The Innu are ready and willing to move ahead, but their major obstacle is the federal government. The time has come for Canada to take responsibilities and walk the talk, to show the Innu people that their existence matters, that they are not animals.

Ed Martin's film shakes us into awareness. It gives us an honest, straightforward story that everyone ought to see. Martin voices what so many white people think: "I have a hard time coming to grips with the fact that we have done this to yet another group of people, yet I am at a loss to know as to how we can now contribute to making it better." He spoke to Innu leaders, doctors, anthropologists and former government bureaucrats for the film. He did not speak to anyone from Health Canada or Indian and Northern Affairs, as both declined interview requests. To gain knowledge on this topic please visit the website at "http://www.firstcontact.ca/Surviving-Canada" www.firstcontact.ca/Surviving-Canada

This Best Boy Productions documentary will air on CBC Newsworld in January 2005.

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Hot flavours for a cold season

By Macdevil

With a skip in our step and smiles across our faces, the Nation Magazine's intrepid taste-testing crew ventured out for lunch to review the latest delivery of Walkerswood's fire roasted fun! We chose our favourite South American sandwich joint where we were comfortably seated on the patio to bask in the warm, friendly sun.

Altogether, our contact for **Walkerswood Caribbean Foods** had sent us three hot sauces for review. There was definitely a good buzz of anticipation within the group as to what kind of a ride we were about to take. And who would blow their stack first?

Once our food arrived, there was no going back. We were in for a treat. Eagerly, but with due caution, each one of us started pouring out the love straight from the bottle.

First off was the mildest of the trio. **Firestick Pepper Sauce** - a smooth blend of spice with a good tang on the tongue and thankfully, not overpowered by vinegar. This offering was definitely a step above your everyday local supermarket .99 cent bottle of piquant sauce. Don't be lulled here, it had kick and will put your buds on alert.

Next up, **Scotch Bonnet Pepper Sauce**. Egad & smokestack lightning! The pain (ahem, we mean thrill) starts at the base of your spine and like a bolt of electricity, tingles every nerve all the way up to the back of your head. What fun! Its blend of habanero (the hottest) pepper around, with scallion, garlic and thyme make this sauce worth the trip. Dramatic in its heat, but when used in the right amounts, will elevate any dish to new plateaus of flavour. Our mouths weren't the only parts watering now.

Combining our spice for life with a newshound's Nation-like curiosity, we forged onwards to complete our taste-testing session. Amazingly, we managed to locate the third and final bottle on the table, despite mini-waterfalls gushing down our cheeks. "Do it, do it" said Steve encouragingly. With **Jonkanoo Pepper Sauce,** the Caribbean's African heritage came alive in a carnival of red hot peppers dancing to a steady drum across your tongue. Hot indeed, but having adjusted to the 'climate' we could savour the smouldering flavours of thyme, garlic and onion. "Wow, what a delight", exclaimed Neil enthusiastically, "...awesome afterburn, you can really enjoy the zest after the heat!" We were pumped!

Many thanks to Walkerswood Caribbean Foods for the thrills & chills.

Secondly, to Karen Pineman at G.S. Schwartz & Co. Inc. for making it all happen.

Be sure to look / ask for their products at your local food store or visit them on-line at **www.walkerswood.com**

The Spirit of Hockey!

by Will Nicholls

As Canada's world champion junior hockey team showed last week, it's nice to know hockey isn't really dead despite all the grumblings of the owners and players of the National Hockey league. Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus after all. And more often, he's just doing his thing in the hinterlands of Canada, where a bunch of unpaid hockey players got together to have a special holiday fundraising exhibition game.

It took place in Chibougamau between the Chibougamau Senior AA team and Ambassador Midget BB's on December 29. I noticed the Senior AA team no name. Talk about being well known or at least having a reputation of some sort.

It was to be a battle between age and experience against the enthusiasm and energy of youth as one team had members between 14 and 35 while the other team is aged 16-17.

The fundraising aspect was hard to see as there wasn't anyone at the doors collecting entry fees, though one woman was rushing through the crowd at the arena selling 50/50 draw tickets with a passion. Since neither my friends or I didn't win I don't know how much was raised. Hey, it was the holidays and I was doing minimal work while on vacation.

I guess that means I wasn't totally on my game but back to the real game. It was a back and forth battle for a little while but after reaching a score of 3-2 for Chibougamau, the Seniors really took off. It wouldn't be until the second period at a score of 8-2 that the youngsters would start a comeback. The score would whipsaw back and forth with the mad dashes all players were making. I swear on my grandfathers' pet budgies' grave that you could see the sweat streaming behind them at times.

Just watching them I started sweating myself and was forced to seek relief. At this point it might be interesting to note that the arena bar had plenty of beer but was low on all types of hard stuff and other forms of firewater. The SAQ strike is taking its toll on Chibougamau hockey fans.

With the Ambassador making a comeback, bumping the score up to 9-8, it was looking bad for Clifford Benac and the boys. Then in a flurry of energy (I suspect steroid supplements) Calvin Blacksmith, Titus Bosum and the rest of the Seniors quickly brought home a bevy of goals making the final score 13-9 or something like that.

The team willingly posed for a group shot. The way they naturally settled into the pose showed these lads were no amateurs to the game of hockey player posing.

It was a happy bunch of boys in the dressing room who sent me out for a few after-game brews. Somehow my camera ended up with a few extra pictures on it.

Enjoy and remember the real spirit of hockey lives on and it sure as h*ll isn't with the NHL. Happy New Year from all the lads from the Chibougamau Senior AA team

UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

A Moving Experience

by Xavier Kataquapit

The fall of 1989 was a period of great change for my family. In 1988 we moved from our original home in the community to a new building my dad had purchased. We were excited to be moving into our new home. It was good in many ways to leave our old place, a three-bedroom house that expanded over the years into a five-bedroom home for our family of nine children and two parents. There was not much change to our neighbourhood as our new home was located right across the street from our original place. However, we filled our new home with brand new furnishings and it sat on a large plot of land with a driveway and a newly constructed outhouse. We were making a new start and everyone was happy. Although the new place was a little smaller with only four bedrooms, it worked out as my sister Jackie had recently married and moved into her own home.

We only lived in the second house for about a year and then dad got wind of news from the local Chief and Council that a new subdivision was being developed in town for local residents. The new homes included two living levels, new appliances, carpeting and, best of all, running water. Dad quickly put our family up for one of the new homes and luckily we were accepted as one of the recipients. That summer, as construction took place on the new subdivision, dad took us all across town to visit our new home. The subdivision was located on the edge of the community in the midst of upturned clay plots of land, muddy driveways and newly laid gravel. Dad was excited at the thought of our future home. My brothers and sisters and I were all happy too but we had some apprehensions and worries that somehow this dream might disappear. It was too good to be true.

At the same time, I remember feeling a great sense of hope for the future as we walked through the building, which was still under construction. The windows had been installed but the interior was not finished and we could see through the frame as we walked on bare plywood floors. Dad took us for a tour around the house, pointing out his and mom's room upstairs and asking us where we wanted ours in the four bedrooms downstairs. We all lobbied for our own space and we scouted out the bedrooms to figure out what best suited our needs.

The new homes were not finished until late in the fall. I left home before the move to our new house to start my secondary education in the south. I called back home every week to get an update from mom and dad who told me about the great move that was taking place in Attawapiskat.

I came home before Christmas and was amazed and almost overwhelmed with the changes that had taken place. Our family had moved twice and now I was attending high school in Timmins. I came home with my brothers Mario and Philip. We landed in an old Hawker Sidley airplane and the entire family was there to take us to our new dream home. We quickly toured the house and selected the arrangement of our new rooms. There was a great sense of relief and peace. There was running water in our kitchen and we could flush the toilet. We were happy to not have to put up with indoor toilet pots that had to be regularly dumped in a hole in our backyard. It was great not to have to boil water to wash the dishes, for cleaning and laundry, to take a bath or just wash up in the morning.

Still, on visiting our original family home I felt a sense of sadness. We had crossed some kind of threshold and although things seemed better on the other side of town we were still anxious. The old house was cold and felt deserted. Many of the things we had grown up with and held dear were tossed aside. I can still see our old home-made bunk beds where our names were etched in the wood. If I close my eyes and drift back I can still hear the chatter in those rooms, the sounds of mom working in the kitchen and the snap and crackle of the wood stove.

I think dad felt the same way. It didn't take long for him to haul the old place up to sit adjacent to the new dream home. It was as though we all felt we owed something to this old house or maybe we just didn't want to let go of some things. Anyway it still sits there only a stone's throw away from our new world in the Attawapiskat subdivision.

The 32nd annual Marathon was run in Honolulu on December 12/2004 and once again The North West Company entered a team to run/walk and by so doing raise funds for Diabetes research. In all there were 25,671 participants in the event, 59 of which were from Diabetes Canada. We had six of those participants' plus two spouses who accompanied the team and decided to enter at the last minute; all eight finished the course.

Our team did an excellent job of individually fundraising; two of them raised over $10,000.00 by themselves. The team raised sufficient funds to pay the $6500 per person cost for the marathon. Diabetes Canada organizes the event for the North West Company and all funds raised go to that organization.

Jason Louttit, one of the members of the Canadian Diabetes group, completed the course in 9th place overall with a time just under 2 hours 28 minutes for the 42.6 Kilometres. I spoke to Jason some time ago and he said that he was aware of the Louttits in the James Bay area, who were probably relatives some generations back. He is a great participant at these events, having completed his run he turned around and went back out onto the course encouraging all the other participants to keep going and complete the run/walk.

As a further effort to raise funds, the Company sells "Snowmen" to any person willing to support the research. These sell for $2 with all proceeds going directly to Diabetes research. This has been our best year to date and I expect that by December 31/04 we will have sold 35,000 units for a total of $70,000.00. **Last year Wemindji** beat all comers and sold 3209 units, this year they have already beat that number by 2000 more, as of December 26th they had sold 5219. Chisasibi is chasing them for the title and I expect by the end of the month these two communities will have sold 12,000 units between them or more than one third of the total sold overall!!!

They are the Champions. Wemindji, with the smaller population deserves special thanks and the Company extends a special note of gratitude to the community and the staff in the store. These efforts will someday lead to a medical cure for all types of Diabetes. Meanwhile we encourage everyone to keep active and support the cause. Our total fundraising this year will exceed $130,000.00 and we are very grateful for being able to make that difference.

The Company extends a happy and healthy New Year to all our customers and looks forward to your support in the coming year.

Meegwetch

Jim Deyell, Regional Manager, Public Affairs,
The North West Co.,
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CLASSIFIEDS

BIRTHDAYS – 101

We want to send special birthday greetings to our daughter Roselyn Grace Whiskeychan who will be celebrating her birthday on January 1st, 2005. We are so blessed to have a wounderful daughter like you. "HAPPY 2nd BIRTHDAY BABE" We love you so much, every beat of our heart. With lots of love from, mommy (Amanda), daddy (Merlin) and your little baby brother (Rylin boysh), Waskaganish.

Sending birthday wishes to two persons from Waswanipi, my sister Bridget Salt Blacksmith on January 9,2005 and my niece Edith Salt on January 11,2005. Oh by the way Edith, James Jr is not taken yet. Is that good news for you? Wishing you both a Happy Birthday and have a great day. From Linda Moar, Nemaska Qc.

We would like to wish a Happy 3rd Birthday to a very special girl in our lives, BRANDY TINA ANGEL WAPACHEE on December 31st, 2004 from Nemaska. Brandy you are Googoo and Joushoum's girl cause your mom was the special child in our lives and you look like her. God Bless, Love Grandma Linda & Grandpa William Moar.

The staff at Beesum Communications would like to wish Linda Mohan a terrific birthday year. From your loving co-workers, Will, Aaron, Linda, Mona, Steve, Jake, Séri, Claire, Norman and last but not least Danielle, Tapper and Playa.

My handsome nephew, Peter Brian Kanatewat, will be celebrating his 20th birthday on January 28, 2005. When your Dad first told me of your safe arrival here on this earth, I couldn\'t hold back the tears of how happy I was. I was especially happy for your grandparents (Janie & Robert), for their very first grandchild. I\'m sure they felt the same way I felt, maybe even more joyous than I was. Wishing you all the best on your birthday and good health in the new year. Good luck in school and we are all hoping that you graduate this year. Keep up the good work and being who you are. I am so proud of you! Enjoy your day! I Love You With All My Heart! Love your auntie Charlotte P.S. Your cousins, Steve, Candace & Darius send their wishes too!

A very precious little angel will be celebrating her 2nd birthday on January 31, 2005. Her name is Kaylin Jayda Hayley Kanatewat. She is such an adorable little princess, the one and only little great-grandchild of Janie & Robert Kanatewat. You are loved so much in everything you do little girl. Your mother is doing a great job in raising you and we thank her for doing such a good job. Keep up the good work, Marsha! Wishing you many more birthdays to come and wishing you

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all the best in the new year! Love from your googoom Charlotte & family, Lots of hugs & kisses too!

Happy 17th Birthday To Sheldon Snow On January 4, 2004. From A Girl From Waswanipi

PERSONAL – 300

Merry Christmas to my family and friends in kawawa! Happy belated birthdays to Yahyah Guanish, Marianne Chescappio, Tshiueten Vachon, Jolene Mckenzie...from Kayla Vachon.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to my family Clarence, Roland & Patricia, Gabe & Anita, Nellie, Jr & my Angel & My moms , Dads & to all my brothers (their wives kids) my one & only sister Lisa (husband & kids) my inlaws, relatives & friends. Also Happy 1st Christmas to my 2 handsome boyfriends Colin & Thomas, Grandma loves you & my little princess Pearl Scipio. I love you all. From: Barbara Snowboy.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all readers, and to my family and friends. Wendy

Here I am,
I know I'm a very beautiful girl
Name: julieanne
Email: lucky_8340@hotmail.com
Area Code: 819
Telephone: 895-2186

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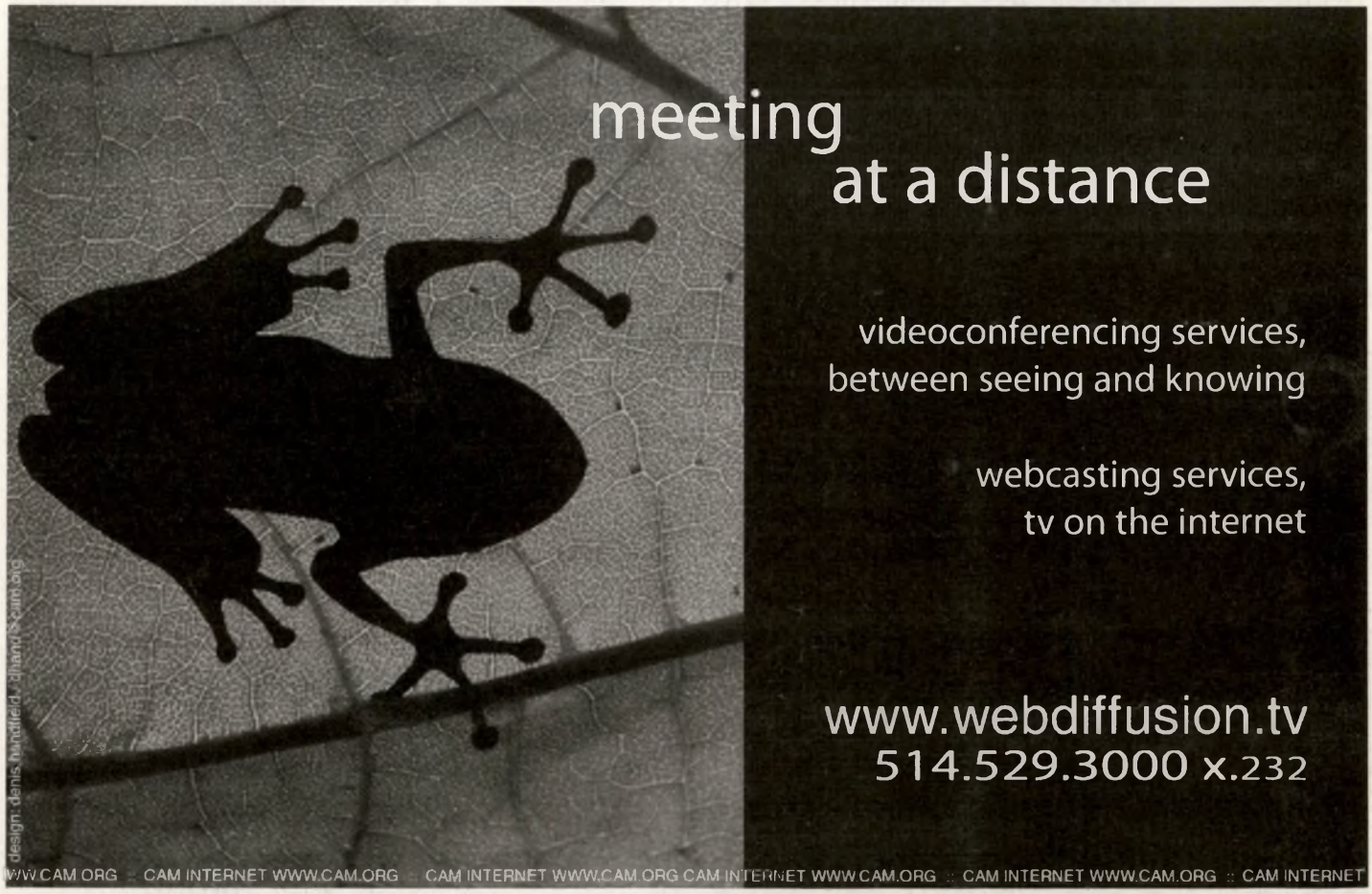

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Left to the rignt : Mr Pierre Lafontaine, general director of Fondation de l'UQAT, Mr Fernand Trahan, mayor of Val-d'Or and co-president of the campaign. ***Mr Peter Capkun president of construction Promec,*** Dr Ted Moses, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees and co-president of the campaign.

Left to the rignt : Mr Pierre Lafontaine, general director of Fondation de l'UQAT, Mr Fernand Trahan, mayor of Val-d'Or and co-president of the campaign. ***Mr Denis Fortier, director of Groupe Conseil Trame,*** Dr Ted Moses, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees and co-president of the campaign.

Left to the rignt : Mr Pierre Lafontaine, general director of Fondation de l'UQAT, Mr Fernand Trahan, mayor of Val-d'Or and co-president of the campaign. ***Mr Daniel Pépin and Daniel Deschambeault of Samson Bélair Deloitte et Touche,*** Dr Ted Moses, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees and co-president of the campaign.

Left to the rignt : Mr Pierre Lafontaine, general director of Fondation de l'UQAT, Mr Fernand Trahan, mayor of Val-d'Or and co-president of the campaign. ***Mr Brian Faubert of Monette, Leclerc, St-Denis architectes,*** Dr Ted Moses, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees and co-president of the campaign.

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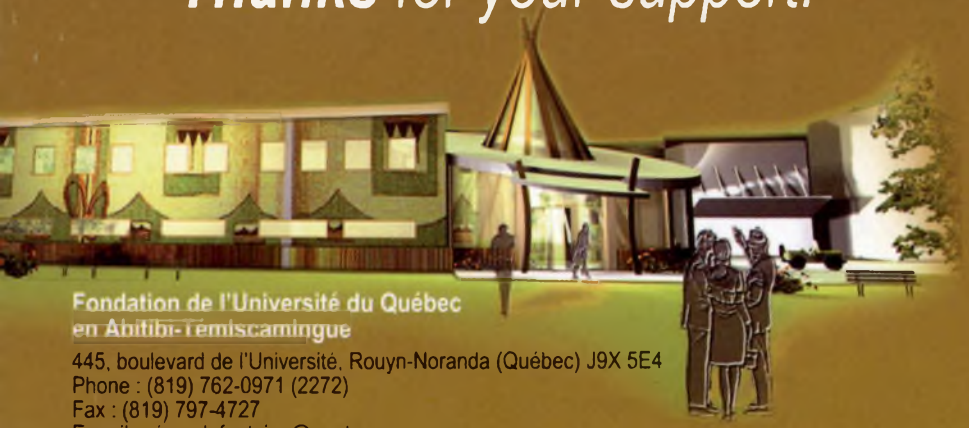
Thanks *for your support!*



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